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THESIS

**US NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE AND ITS EFFECT ON
U.S.-RUSSIAN ARMS CONTROL**

by

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June 2000

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ARMS CONTROL**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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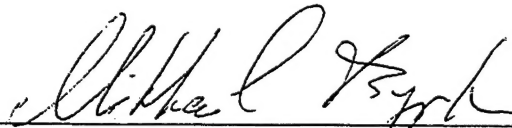
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ABSTRACT

This thesis provides an analysis of the proposed and potential security functions of a United States National Missile Defense system and determines what implications the construction of such a system would have on current and future U.S.-Russian arms control agreements. This research is critical for understanding the evolution, both domestically and internationally, of ballistic missile defense systems and their link to nuclear strategy and arms control. This thesis will also explore the policy debates and political trends in both the United States and Russia concerning U.S. NMD, in an attempt to better explain each country's position.

Compromise between the two countries on arms control issues involving both offensive and defensive systems is only possible if post-Cold War realities are accepted. The current arms control regime that governs both offensive and defensive systems is based on a political and military reality that no longer exists. If the two former adversaries still desire to participate in bilateral arms control, the basis of that arms control needs to represent current realities, and change its focus from limitation and restriction to stewardship and inspection.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 20, 1999, Defense Secretary William Cohen announced that the United States would move forward in the development of an NMD system, touching off a new phase in an old debate. At issue is whether such a system would adequately provide defense for the fifty states against long-range missile threats posed by rogue nations, or whether it would simply restart the "arms race" and further injure relations with Russia. Those supporting NMD have argued that the limited NMD capability that the United States is developing is focused primarily on countering rogue nation threats and will not be capable of countering Russia's nuclear deterrent. The Clinton administration decided to move ahead with funding necessary to pay for an NMD deployment, but went on to announce that no deployment decision would not be made before June 2000. This gave the administration the time needed to continue testing and clear any diplomatic hurdles. One such hurdle is the ABM Treaty.

The administration prefers to maintain the ABM Treaty, which was originally concluded between the United States and the now defunct Soviet Union in 1972. At first glance, it is hard to see how a treaty designed to prevent a nationwide missile defense system can be amended to allow one, but the Clinton administration has argued that the limited NMD capabilities it envisions would not jeopardize Russia's capacity to hold the United States at risk. In order for the United States to move forward on national missile defense and remain a party to the ABM Treaty, Russia must agree to the proposed treaty modification.

The challenge for the United States will be to design and deploy a limited national missile defense while at the same time easing Russian fears. The Russians are likely to continue to oppose any changes to the ABM Treaty that would allow the United States to move forward with NMD deployment or advanced TMD capabilities. If the United States hopes to be able to make a deployment decision by June 2000, it will need to find a compromise that eases Russian fears, or decide to exercise its legal right to withdrawal from the ABM Treaty. The Clinton administration's approach has been to link the ABM Treaty /NMD issue to future arms control negotiations. The hope is that the Russians will allow the U.S. to move forward with NMD if future missile reductions are made. This would allow the Russians to slim down an already aging arsenal, while at the same time keeping parity with the United States and remaining a nuclear superpower.

The Clinton administration has not been able to successfully link the NMD/ABM treaty issue to future arms control and it appears that compromise is not possible. Even if the Russians were to agree to ABM Treaty modifications, it is doubtful that such an agreement would receive Senate approval. Many supporters of NMD, but critics of the Clinton administration's policy, have argued that under such a linkage the United States would be leaving its fate against rogue state missiles up to the Russians. The administration's argument that arms control is too important to simply throw away does indeed have validity, but any new arms control agreement should accurately represent the post-Cold War global security reality. If the intent of the administration and the arms control community is to maintain a bilateral treaty relationship with the Russians, it should not be done at the expense of national security. Any new arms control agreement should take into account that the Russians do not have the economic capability to engage

in an arms race and should be based on the premise that U.S. strategic weapons, or defenses for that matter, would not be focused on the Russian Federation.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This thesis describes the proposed and potential security functions of a United States National Missile Defense system and determines what implications the construction of such a system would have on U.S.-Russian arms control agreements. This research explores the link between ballistic missile defense systems and nuclear strategy and arms control. This thesis also will explore the policy debates and political trends in both the United States and Russia concerning U.S. NMD.

A. THESIS OVERVIEW

Defense against nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles has been at the center of the nuclear strategy and arms control debate since the end of World War II. Once it was decided that the only defense against nuclear weapons would be defense against their delivery, defensive systems were constructed to target long-range bombers. The development and deployment of ballistic missiles able to deliver nuclear weapons soon made defense against strategic bombers a secondary concern. Both sides began to focus their defensive efforts on ballistic missiles, a much greater technological task than defending against manned bombers. Scientists and policy makers in both the United States and the Soviet Union struggled for years to estimate the utility of ballistic missile defense.

Within the United States, some argue that a defensive system, in tandem with strong disarmament initiatives and arms control agreements, could end the offensive arms race and make the nuclear world stable. Others argued that defensive systems were needed because effective disarmament and realistic arms control would never be possible and only a strong defensive could deter an enemy preemptive strike. Still others saw no difference in offensive and defensive systems and viewed advances in both as dangerous

and destabilizing. At issue was the question of whether or not such systems actually protected their citizenry, or by increasing the incentive to create better offensive capabilities, only put them in greater danger. These concerns were the driving force behind arms control agreements that limited offensive and defensive capabilities. The main agreement that limited defensive capabilities was the 1972 Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty, which some consider the “cornerstone” of offensive arms control agreements. Others argued that the offensive and defensive arms control agreements signed between the United States and the Soviet Union no longer represent post-Cold War security concerns and should be either amended or abandoned.

Following the end of the Cold War, several new security challenges and dilemmas have again brought the issue of creating defensive systems to the forefront of U.S.-Russian relations. Because of the proliferation of nuclear capabilities and the spread of ballistic missile technology to “rogue nations,” the United States believes that its security might be threatened. In response to this threat, the United States again finds it necessary to explore the possibility of creating a national missile defense.

On January 20, 1999, Defense Secretary William Cohen announced that the United States would develop an NMD system, touching off a new phase in this old debate. The program that has been endorsed by the Clinton administration develop a system that could be deployed by 2005 to protect the United States against a small number of attacking missiles.¹ At issue is whether such a system would provide “defense for the fifty states against long-range missile threats posed by rogue nations,”² or whether it would simply restart the “arms race” and further complicate U.S. relations with Russia.

The NMD policy debate within the United States is complicated. Those supporting NMD who still support the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty believe that the limited NMD capability that the United States is developing counters only "rogue nation" threats and cannot counter Russia's nuclear deterrent. Some Republicans in both the House of Representatives and the Senate have criticized the Clinton administration for not developing more robust NMD. Republican critics believe that a series of incidents during 1998 highlighted emerging threats and may catalyze public support. In May 1998 India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons. In the summer of 1998, North Korea, Pakistan, and Iran tested new ballistic missiles that, while not able to reach the United States, demonstrated a growing sophistication in missile design. Opponents of missile defense point out that, even after 40 years, the United States has not been able to develop a "workable defensive missile system."³ Aside from disputes over technological capabilities, NMD opponents argue that national missile defense provides no defense against attacks not delivered by ballistic missiles.⁴

The Clinton administration decided to move ahead with NMD funding, but went on to announce that no deployment decision would be made before June 2000. This gave the administration the time needed to continue testing and clear diplomatic hurdles to development. One such hurdle is the ABM Treaty. The Clinton administration maintains that the ABM Treaty is "the cornerstone of strategic stability," and the United States is committed to continued efforts to "strengthen the treaty and enhance its viability and effectiveness."⁵ If the ABM Treaty is to be maintained as the cornerstone for existing and future arms reduction treaties, the challenge for the United States will be to design and deploy an effective national missile defense while easing Russian fears.

Two competing schools of strategic thinking are driving Russia's national security policy debate. The traditionalist thinking "calls for the preservation of a strong emphasis on maintaining a military strategic balance with the United States" and relies upon existing bilateral agreements and treaties to maintain the status quo.⁶ Those who advocate a strict adherence to the ABM Treaty believe that any wavering on U.S. NMD would give the United States a strategic advantage. Traditionalists are convinced that the United States is determined to withdraw from the ABM treaty and move towards acquiring absolute protection from enemy missile attack.

The other school recognizes "the virtual disappearance of the threat of American nuclear attack against Russia."⁷ Proponents of this thinking, called "moderates" by Yuri Chkanikov and Andrei Shoumikhin, realize that parity is not possible.⁸ Instead, they recommend that Russia strive towards a level of sufficiency, a force structure that would allow Russia to deliver unacceptable damage in a retaliatory strike.⁹ These moderates share the same view as the traditionalists on the effects of U.S. national missile defense. Both suggest that the United States is masking its true goals. Both the traditionalists and the moderates remain perplexed by the Clinton administration's calls for both maintaining the ABM Treaty, albeit with revisions, and pursuing development of a system for national missile defense against limited attacks.

If U.S. officials intend to make a deployment decision by June 2000, they must find a compromise that eases Russian fears, or decide to exercise their legal right to withdraw from the ABM Treaty. The Clinton administration's approach has been to link the ABM Treaty/NMD issue to future Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) negotiations. The administration has indicated that it will not submit the September 1997

ABM Treaty agreements to the U.S. Senate, which would change the ABM treaty from a bilateral U.S.-USSR accord to a multilateral treaty with five parties: the United States, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, nor will it begin formal START III negotiations, until the Russians have ratified START II. Now that the long ratification process of START II has finally been completed, the hope is that the Russians will allow the United States to move forward with NMD if future nuclear force reductions are codified in START III. This would allow the Russians to slim down an already aging arsenal, while at the same time keeping parity with the United States and remaining a nuclear superpower.

B. METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

The data employed in this thesis is drawn from a qualitative analysis of primary sources, including Joint U.S.-USSR/Russian Statements, treaties, speeches, and interviews. It also draws upon a variety of secondary sources such as journalistic and scholarly analyses of core NMD and arms control issues.

Chapter II of this thesis provides an overview of the evolution of the technology of defensive systems, as well as an analysis of the evolution of the policy regarding the development and deployment of these defenses. This chapter is meant to give the reader a basic understanding of the history of defensive systems and their relationship to arms control. The chapter will also discuss the evolution of the ABM Treaty and its place in offensive arms control. Chapter III is a review of the current United States policy debate over the deployment of a limited National Missile Defense. The position of the Clinton administration, House and Senate Republicans, and members of the arms control regime will be reviewed in depth in order to fully layout the complexities of the U.S. position. The fourth chapter will take a similar look at the strategic debate taking place in the

Russian Federation and will discuss Russia's National Security Concept and the reasons that many Russians object to U.S. NMD proposals. Using the official policies and political opinions discussed in the third and fourth chapter as a basis, Chapter V will be a discussion of the possible effects that U.S. NMD could have on the future of START and the ABM Treaty. By analyzing the history of defensive policy, the current debates of the United States and Russia, as well as implications that U.S. NMD will have on arms control agreements, in chapter six the author will offer some observations on the future of U.S. NMD and U.S.-Russian bilateral arms control.

II. EVOLUTION OF MISSILE DEFENSE DEBATE

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the history of the policy debate surrounding defensive systems, their relationship to offensive systems, and deterrence theory. First, it will examine many of the early national missile defense arguments and explain why NMD systems were seen as necessary and their relationship to offensive systems and arms control. Second, the events and policy debates leading up to the deployment of the first Antiballistic Missile systems, as well as those events that lead to the negotiation and signing of 1972 ABM Treaty, will be described. Finally, the revival of NMD/BMD will be discussed and related to the ABM treaty, in order to provide the reader with a better understanding of the driving factors of the second NMD age and how the current debate has come about. The tenets of the treaty and agreed statements and protocols will also be discussed to clarify why second age NMD proposals require ABM Treaty modification.

B. DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS

In the 1940's U.S. officials began to think about defense against atomic weapons. Initially, defense against nuclear weapons and defense against their delivery vehicles were seen as two different issues. Many people including President Harry Truman believed that defense against atomic weapons would soon be possible. In an October 23, 1945, address, the President told Congress "every new weapon will eventually bring some counter defense to it."¹⁰ President Truman's comment followed an earlier comment by Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, who also believed that atomic weapon defenses were possible. According to Admiral Nimitz it was a "historical truth" that "there has never yet been a weapon against which man has been unable to devise a counter weapon or defense."¹¹

1. Evolution of Theory and Policy

When the experts concluded that there was no direct defense to the atomic bomb, the focus of strategic defense then shifted from defenses aimed at the bomb's atomic composition to defenses that attacked the bomb's delivery vehicle.¹² Because ICBM's were not yet viewed as a reliable delivery system, the ideas of missile defense and defense against air dropped nuclear weapons were pursued independently. With the lessons of World War II fresh in the minds of many of the United States strategic thinkers, it was believed that offensive delivery systems would have a decided advantage over defensive systems. American scientist Vannevar Bush and British scientist Patrick Blackett, however, argued that technological improvements in radar, jet engines, and missile guidance would improve the chances of locating, prosecuting, and destroying incoming manned bombers, which served as the first reliable nuclear weapon delivery vehicles.¹³ Theorists, who believed in the primacy of the offense, argued that technology would affect both sides equally, allowing the offense to maintain its advantage.

As the two sides debated their respective points of view, it became apparent that nuclear war was different than conventional war. In order to decrease the chance of catastrophic damage in nuclear conflicts, the defense would be required to destroy an extremely high percentage of the attacking nuclear delivery vehicles, giving the attacker a decisive advantage. It was believed that any major improvement in defensive technology would enhance the need for greater offensive capability, creating an offensive versus defensive arms race

While the United States was trying to decide on the utility of strategic defenses and their role in future disarmament or arms control, efforts to develop defenses against ballistic missiles were given low priority. This was because the full potential of the

future implications of ICBM's as a nuclear delivery system was not yet realized. The idea of pursuing continental defense was initially advanced by two separate groups. One group advocated defensive systems as part of a larger package of arms control initiatives, while the second did not believe arms control would work and sought defensive systems as an added form of security. During the late years of the Truman administration and into the early years of President Eisenhower, the United States attempted to limit the expansion of nuclear weapons in both the United States and the Soviet Union and began to consider the possibility of bilateral arms control and disarmament initiatives.¹⁴

President Truman tasked a group of leading American scientists and policy makers to investigate the possibility of limiting the growth of nuclear weapons in the hope of preventing further destabilizing competition. The group was called the Panel of Consultants on Disarmament, which was chaired by J. Robert Oppenheimer and included such members as McGeorge Bundy and Allen Dulles. Out of their discussions came the thinking that defense strategies and arms control were "interlocked."¹⁵ They believed that by emphasizing continental defense, the United States could demonstrate its interests in arms control. According to the Panel's January 1953 report to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, a stride towards continental defenses "cannot be read as an aggressive move, and it should constitute real evidence of the fact that we believe atomic weapons to be dangerous for all concerned."¹⁶ Those who did not believe that a viable arms control agreement with the Soviets was possible also backed the idea of creating a continental defense. They believed such a defense was needed to blunt a Soviet surprise attack. According to a Department of State: Policy and Planning Staff Paper from November 1952 authored by Paul Nitze and Carlton Savage, "an effective defense would be a

powerful deterrent to war; the enemy would be reluctant to strike if the blows would not be effective against us.”¹⁷

The Soviets were also giving great consideration to creating a defensive capability against nuclear delivery vehicles. In his book *The Best Defense*, David Goldfischer points out that although the Soviet receptivity to a combination of continental defense and arms control was never tested, “one can hardly assume that the Soviets would have rejected a serious U.S. proposal for a mutual defense emphasis (MDE.)”¹⁸ Goldfischer points out that despite the exaggerated American estimate of Soviet offensive capabilities, “it became increasingly clear that in their deployment policy the Soviets had in fact emphasized anti-aircraft capabilities.”¹⁹ The construction of an early warning radar system in 1946, and the later deployment of jet-powered MIG-15’s designed to intercept high altitude strategic bombers, displayed the Soviet’s emphasis on defense.²⁰ This trend would continue, and in 1948 the Soviet Air Defenses became an independent branch of the armed services. Soviet Air Defenses employed a half million men, split between ground based anti-aircraft artillery and airborne aircraft interception.²¹

Soviet offensive technology developments, however, increased U.S. vulnerability. The widespread production of Soviet hydrogen bombs, deployment of the Soviet’s first intercontinental bomber, “Bear,” and the 1957 testing of an ICBM demonstrated to the United States that the Soviets were interested in pursuing offensive, as well as defensive, capabilities. A combination of the Russian experience, in which national survival required a robust homeland defense, coupled with little confidence in the technological capabilities of early generations of long range delivery systems and a recognition that the future of offensive weapons lay in the development of long range ICBM’s, might explain

Soviet posture.²² Had the United States decided to abandon its offensive advantage and adopt a strategic deployment process similar to that of the Soviets, perhaps both sides could have approached a credible defense-oriented deterrent posture.²³ Such a security environment would have been close to Oppenheimer's vision of the conditions necessary for a successful disarmament process to begin. Such conditions would allow both sides to feel secure that their opponent would not be able to conceal weapons in violation of disarmament agreements and hold the other side vulnerable. Oppenheimer believed that such an environment would yield a situation in which "steps of evasion will either be too vast to conceal or far too small to have in view of existing measures of defense, a decisive strategic effect."²⁴ Such an agreement would have required the Americans and Soviets to find a common interest in offensive disarmament. However, this was not the case and Oppenheimer's vision was not realized. In fact, just the opposite of Oppenheimer's vision would come true as the development and subsequent deployment of the ICBM as a nuclear delivery vehicle caused American and Soviet interests in offensive disarmament to become even more divergent.

2. Creating an Antiballistic Missile System

Even though the Americans were concerned about the deployment of Soviet long-range intercontinental bombers, they realized that, with their limited numbers and the limited likelihood that they would be able to pierce U.S. defenses, the chance of a Soviet nuclear strike against the U.S. homeland was small. This would change on October 4, 1957, as the launch of the Soviet Sputnik I, according to Lawrence Freedman, sent a message to the United States that it "no longer enjoyed invulnerability to the ravages of war."²⁵ Many Americans worried that the launch of Sputnik I signaled that the Soviets would be able to gain a decisive advantage over the United States in terms of nuclear

delivery capability. Both Soviets and Americans saw the utilization of ICBM's as a means of gaining the upper hand in the new nuclear struggle and therefore both built them.

The decision to deploy a new offensive weapon again raised the question about the possibility of developing defenses, an Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) system. Progress in developing long-range missiles, combined with evidence that the Soviets also were developing an ABM capability, motivated the United States to intensify its efforts to develop missile defenses. America's first anti-ballistic missile interceptor, the Nike-Zeus, emerged from the Nike program, an Army anti-aircraft missile. Even during the early days of the Nike-Zeus program it was not fully decided whether ABM systems would be strategically beneficial or destabilizing. Two expert panels in the middle fifties addressed this issue; their findings were listed in each group's respective report.

The Killian Report, presented to the National Security Council (NSC) in February 1955, saw little likelihood in defenses being adequate to permit survival against a full-scale attack.²⁶ The Gaither Report was presented to the NSC in 1957. It diverged from the Killian Report on the likely technological capabilities of future ABM systems. The Gaither Report stated that dramatic improvements would be made in the quantity and quality of future ICBM's, but also acknowledged the probability that technological advances would be made in detecting and defending against future missile attacks.²⁷ It was concluded that "the missiles in turn will be made more sophisticated to avoid destruction; and there will be a continuing race between the offensive and the defensive."²⁸

During the late fifties and into middle sixties advances in missile and radar technology made it possible for the United States to begin fielding missile defenses. For the majority of the sixties, the Office of the Secretary of Defense studied many of the effects that deploying an ABM system could have on deterrence. There were several key events that led the U.S. officials to believe that unless they deployed a defensive system, they ran a serious risk of falling behind the Soviets. Perhaps the most notable event was the February 1967 announcement that the Soviet Union had begun to deploy the Galosh missile system around Moscow. According to Donald Baucom, the staff historian for the Ballistic Missile Defense Office, "if the Soviets continued, the United States also would have to field an ABM system or risk allowing the Soviets to create a dangerous asymmetry in superpower strategic force postures."²⁹ The United States had been considering three separate roles for an American ABM system.³⁰ The first role was a system designed for a robust population defense against Soviet missiles. The second was a thin population defense set up clearly against Chinese rather than Soviet missiles, which also would offer protection against accidental launch. The third role was to protect ICBM fields, allowing the United States to maintain its second strike capability and deterring a Soviet first strike.

The potentially destabilizing effects of an ABM system deployment were understood by the Johnson administration. The administration also realized what it would mean if the United States was not able to match Soviet defensive capabilities. In testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Appropriations, Secretary of Defense McNamara laid out the administration's plan for dealing with the effects of both scenarios. The plan was "to pursue with undiminished vigor the development, test, and

evaluation of the Nike-X system...but to take no action now to deploy the system.”³¹ While the testing was taking place, McNamara told the committee that the administration planned “to initiate negotiations with the Soviet Union designed, through formal or informal agreement, to limit the deployment of antiballistic missile systems.”³² The main objective of these talks would be to keep the deployment of ABM systems down to a minimum, so as to prevent the evolution of first-strike capabilities and an arms race.³³ In the event that these negotiations were unsuccessful, McNamara explained that “\$375 million has been included in the fiscal year 1968 budget to provide for such actions as may be required at that time.”³⁴ This plan provided President Johnson with the flexibility he needed to allow the United States to remain competitive in defensive systems, while seeking to limit their destabilizing potential.

President Johnson and Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin met at Glassboro, New Jersey, in June 1967 to discuss the Johnson proposal to limit ABM systems along with a number of other arms control issues. Attempts to negotiate an agreement failed and on September 18, 1967, Secretary of Defense McNamara announced that the United States would deploy an ABM system that was oriented towards the Chinese threat. The new system was named the Sentinel missile defense system and was essentially the same as the Nike-X in configuration and design.³⁵ Although the system was designed to defend against a smaller Chinese threat, it promised other benefits. The system, according to McNamara, would provide “further defense of our Minuteman sites against Soviet attack [and] protection of our population against ...accidental launch of an intercontinental missile by any of the nuclear powers.”³⁶ This deployment plan retained a combination of the three ABM systems that the administration considered.

After his victory in 1968, President Richard Nixon initiated a review of U.S. strategic requirements and decided to modify President Johnson's ABM decision. According to the Nixon administration's assessment, ABM systems under the Johnson administration had been designed to "defend against an unsophisticated ICBM attack"³⁷ President Nixon refocused the U.S. missile defense deployment so that the system would primarily protect U.S. deterrent forces and renamed the ABM system "Safeguard." In August of 1969, shortly after the Nixon administration had invited the Soviets to discuss limitations on strategic arms, by a narrow margin Congress approved the Safeguard deployment and the first ABM system began to deploy at Grand Forks, North Dakota. Soon after this decision in November 1969, the two sides began the first round of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT.)

3. U.S.-Soviet Limitations on Defensive Systems

During the early rounds of SALT, it became apparent that the Soviets were willing to limit ABM systems. It is not clear whether the change from previous Soviet views was based upon a recognition of the logic of the arguments advanced by the Americans at Glassboro in 1967 or a desire to curtail growing U.S. ABM capabilities. In this new round of ABM negotiations both sides proposed strict limits on ABM systems, but serious differences over offensive limitations emerged.³⁸ When it appeared that these disagreements might delay the progress of the talks, the Soviets proposed that only a defensive agreement be reached and that offensive questions be left to later negotiations. The Americans did not accept this plan. They might have wanted to keep the issues undivided so that they could use their ongoing ABM deployments to gain concessions from the Soviets on offensive arms.³⁹ American National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and Soviet Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Dobrynin, in a "back

channel negotiation,” were able to reach an agreement that produced the ABM Treaty of 1972. The Treaty limited the United States and Soviet Union’s ability to deploy missile defenses capable of national defense. These treaty limitations combined with a number of technical limitations led Congress to close the Safeguard system in early 1976, only a few months after it had become operational.

4. Re-emergence of Need for U.S. ABM System

From the 1976 until 1983, the United States continued working on advanced research and development for missile defense systems. While the United States was continuing to improve ABM sensor and interceptor technology, the Soviets were improving their offensive missile capabilities. In the 1970s the Soviets succeeded in reducing the circular error probable (CEP) of their missile from one half mile down to one sixth of a mile.⁴⁰ Along with improved accuracy the Soviets used multiple independent reentry vehicle (MIRV) technology to increase their number of warheads from 2400 to 6000, 3000 of which were accurate enough “to constitute a threat” to U.S. silo-based ICBM’s.⁴¹ This situation led the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in February 1983, to recommend to President Ronald Reagan that the United States begin to place greater emphasis in its strategic plans on developing missile defense systems.

a. SDI

Having come to office favorably disposed towards strategic defenses, President Reagan was highly receptive to the Joint Chiefs recommendation. On March 23, 1983, in a nationally televised speech, the President announced his decision to initiate expanded research and development to see if strategic defenses were feasible. According to Reagan, his goal would be to create a defense so comprehensive that it would render “nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete.” Following a year of technical and strategic

studies on how best to pursue the President's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI,) the Defense Department established the SDI Organization in April 1984. After two and a half years of research and development, the President and Secretary of Defense entered a missile defense system into the defense acquisition process. In September 1987, Strategic Defense System (SDS) Phase I Architecture was approved. This architecture was comprised of six subsystems and provided a structure to guide further refinement of missile defense components. The most significant change in the approved SDS architecture came in 1989 with the replacement of the space-based interceptor (SBI) with an interceptor concept known as Brilliant Pebbles. This change allowed the system's space component to shrink in size and increase in numbers. This made the space based "Brilliant Pebbles" harder to target and therefore less vulnerable than the large SBI's.⁴²

By the time the "Brilliant Pebbles" concept was accepted, the strategic relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States had begun to change. In December 1989 East Germany opened the Berlin Wall, and, in light of this thawing in East and West relations, the Bush administration in late 1989 initiated a review of the SDI program. The review was conducted by Ambassador Henry Cooper, an experienced strategic and space systems engineer and an American negotiator at the Defense and Space Talks. Ambassador Cooper found that, as a result of tensions in the Soviet Union and the proliferation of missile technology, the most significant threat to the United States would be from an unauthorized or terrorist attack. To prepare for these new threats, Cooper suggested that the SDI program be transformed to concentrate on developing defenses against limited attacks rather than preparing for an attack by thousands of Soviet warheads.

b. Shift from Countering a Soviet Threat to Global Protection

In his January 1991 State of the Union address, President George Bush announced that the Defense Department was refocusing the SDI program from defending against a massive Soviet attack to a system known as GPALS, "Global Protection Against Limited Strikes." President Bush explained that the new system would provide "protection from limited ballistic missile strikes, whatever their source."⁴³ The new system contained three main components: a ground-based National Missile Defense (NMD,) a ground Theater Missile Defense (TMD,) and a Space-Based Global Defense. GPALS clearly reflected an increased emphasis on missile threats against deployed American forces, a threat that was displayed when Saddam Hussein used SCUD missiles to attack U.S. allies. By passing the Missile Defense Act of 1991, Congress went on record as supporting the idea of deploying a U.S. missile defense aimed against limited missile threats. After receiving congressional support, President Bush shared the GPALS idea with the Russians, who, in the form of a joint statement signed by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin, agreed to cooperate in the development for a larger Global Protection System. The hope of possible cooperation between the Americans and Russians would continue on into the Clinton administration.

c. Transition from GPALS to Countering Rogue Threats

In May of 1993, newly appointed Defense Secretary Les Aspin announced that the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization was being renamed the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization. This renaming displayed the transformation that was taking place from an emphasis on national protection against a Cold War type missile attack to the missile threats that arose during the Gulf War. For the Clinton administration's first three years, it concentrated the bulk of the BMDO's effort on the creation of a TMD system to

protect deployed American troops and interests. The NMD program was given second priority and considerably less funding. The administration's NMD plan outlined in the Bottom Up Review (BUR) called for limited funding for NMD, preparing for the "time when it might be necessary to quickly deploy defenses for the U.S. homeland."⁴⁴

In early 1996, because of the "emerging threat from longer-range theater missiles"⁴⁵ and a "future threat that undetachable rogue states will obtain ICBM's that can reach the United States,"⁴⁶ the administration decided to increase efforts to create a missile defense that could protect the U.S. homeland. In an April 1996 speech at George Washington University, Defense Secretary Perry outlined why a change in policy was necessary. He stated that "while the United States is safe today from strategic missile attack, this picture could change."⁴⁷ In his speech he acknowledged that some in Congress had begun calling for the administration "to speed up and spend more" on systems to handle future threats, but felt it important not to sacrifice TMD and ignore the present threats facing U.S. forces. Secretary Perry commented "as we develop these systems [TMD and NMD]...in a world where financial priorities must be set, we believe the highest priority should be given to developing and deploying defenses against the missile threat that is here today."

This thinking was the force behind the Clinton administration's new plan for missile defense. In the hopes of updating existing TMD systems and battling the "here and now threat," new TMD efforts would be given top priority. The new plan for NMD was known as the "three-plus-three plan". It called for the BMDO to support three more years of developmental work leading to a systems integration test in 1999. Following this test the United States would be able to field a national missile defense in

three more years, if the threat warranted such a deployment. If deployment was not warranted, the BMDO would continued to make improvements on the existing systems under development, but would always be able to deploy a system in three years following any decision to deploy.

To manage this new NMD policy, the BMDO was directed to establish a Joint Program Office (JPO,) which was activated in April 1997. The role of the new JPO was to oversee the selection of a contractor to ensure the integration of components developed by military services into an effective NMD system.⁴⁸ As the program progressed, the administration began briefing Congress and the American people about the mission for this new system. According to former Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Paul Kaminski, the primary mission of NMD was to develop a capacity to “defend the United States homeland - the continental U.S., Hawaii and Alaska - against limited strategic ballistic missile attack by a rogue nation.”⁴⁹ In addition, such a system would have some capacity against a small accidental or unauthorized launch of a strategic ballistic missile fired from “more nuclear capable states.”⁵⁰

C. THE ABM TREATY AND NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE

1. ABM Treaty Specifics

The purpose of the ABM Treaty, as explained in Article 1, is to prohibit the deployment of an ABM system for “the defense of the territory or provision of a base for such defense.” Originally, the treaty limited the two parties to two ABM deployment areas, but the 1974 protocol to the ABM Treaty further reduced the number to one site each. Each side’s site is limited to a deployment area with a radius of no more than 150 kilometers from either the country’s national command authority or an ICBM launch area. Precise quantitative and qualitative limits are imposed on the ABM systems that

may be deployed, each site is limited to no more than 100 interceptor missiles and 100 launchers. The technical restrictions placed on radar systems were not spelled out in the treaty. After the treaty's completion, however, the two sides were able to reach agreement and the provisions governing these components are detailed in the "Agreed Statements" that accompany the treaty.

The Treaty also addressed future issues. To decrease the pressures of technological change that might have an unsettling impact, both sides agreed "not to develop, test, or deploy ABM systems or components, which are sea-based, space-based, or mobile land based."⁵¹ Should future technology bring forth new ABM systems, other than those employed in current systems, it was agreed that limiting these new systems would be discussed. The Treaty provided for a U.S.-Soviet Standing Consultative Commission to promote the treaty's objectives and its implementation. Future issues that might arise concerning new technology or treaty enforcement are reviewed at five-year intervals.

The major compliance issues that have been addressed by the commission have involved incidents that stem from one side's belief that the other is pushing the treaty's technological or deployment limits. Such an incident occurred in the mid-eighties, when the Americans questioned the purpose of Soviet radar near Krasnoyarsk. The Soviets later admitted that the radar was "a violation of the ABM Treaty" and decided it would be dismantled.⁵² The Soviets also have used standing committee sessions to question U.S. capabilities. In response to the Krasnoyarsk issue, the Soviets raised questions regarding U.S. radar at Thule, Greenland, and Flyingdales Moor, United Kingdom, contending that these systems were in violation of portions of the Agreed Statements.⁵³

2. Problems with Missile Defense Plans

Throughout the treaty's first decade in existence, few concerns were raised and the treaty appeared to be achieving its goal. This relative harmony lasted until the mid-nineteen eighties, when the first phase of the SDI program began to blossom. From the beginning, SDI was bound up with the future of arms control.⁵⁴ As long as the guidelines and stipulations of the ABM treaty were followed, it appeared that SDI would not be able to progress very far. The first phase of SDI sparked the beginning of an intense debate over the interpretation of the ABM Treaty as it applied to the SDI program. At the heart of the debate was the interpretation of passages in the treaty pertaining to futuristic systems that were based on technologies not used in the components and systems regulated by the ABM Treaty.⁵⁵ Supporters of a broad interpretation of the treaty argued that the treaty anticipated development of futuristic systems and did restrain research and development of more sophisticated systems. Advocates of a strict interpretation of the treaty disagreed and held that the treaty prohibited the development, testing, and deployment of all systems except fixed land based ABM systems, regardless of the technologies they were based on. This debate continued throughout the remaining years of the Cold War and was never resolved.⁵⁶

Even though President Bush's refocusing of U.S. missile defense priorities calmed many of the Soviet fears, the GPALS concept still had several ABM Treaty implications. According to the treaty, the GPALS system could never be deployed. In the early nineties there were some hopes that maybe the Soviet Union would be willing to amend the ABM Treaty to allow both sides to deploy defenses against limited threats.⁵⁷ Despite the "spate of Soviet articles and statements" endorsing mutual missile defense against Third Party threats, the official position of the Soviet Union remained in

opposition to expanded BMD.⁵⁸ For the time following the Soviet collapse, it appeared that some sort of agreement on a cooperative system and modifying the ABM Treaty might be reached. The Russians believed that such a system could be constructed outside of, but consistent with, the ABM Treaty.⁵⁹ Russian willingness to work outside of the ABM Treaty changed as U.S.-Russian relations soured. Russia was only willing to allow the United States to pursue systems that were sanctioned by the treaty and its agreed protocols.

3. Updating the ABM Treaty

As the capability of TMD systems increased, arms control advocates began to raise questions about the relationship of advanced TMD to the ABM Treaty, even though TMD had not been specifically covered by the 1972 agreement or in subsequent reviews. In response to this problem, the Clinton administration began negotiations with Russia and the three former Soviet republics "to develop a set of demarcation guidelines that would preserve the integrity of the ABM Treaty"⁶⁰ by distinguishing TMD from NMD. Seven agreements affecting the ABM Treaty were signed or issued by representatives of the United States, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan in September 1997. These agreements would change the ABM treaty from a bilateral U.S.-USSR accord to a multilateral treaty with five parties: the United States, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. The agreements also would extend the treaty's coverage to include theater missile defense and speed limitations on interceptor missiles. These new measures allowed the treaty's parties to develop TMD systems as long as they could not intercept strategic missile warheads.

Many Congressional Republicans opposed the administration's arms control policy. They believed that the demarcation guidelines would impose undue limitations

on the TMD systems that the United States was currently developing. Furthermore, the Republicans advocated changing the ABM Treaty to allow more latitude for the development of limited NMD systems. Much of the current U.S. policy debate concerning NMD centers on the ABM Treaty.

III. U. S. POLICY DEBATE

The domestic NMD policy debate has centered on the views of three major groups. The Clinton administration has led the charge for those calling for a limited NMD system while at the same timing insisting that the principles of the ABM Treaty be preserved. Congressional Republicans and their supporters have advocated moving towards immediate deployment of a limited NMD system and are willing to sacrifice what they believe to be an outdated and irrelevant ABM Treaty. Leading the opposition against all forms of NMD and calling for the preservation of the ABM Treaty have been members of the arms control community.

A. THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

The Clinton administration has argued that the limited NMD capability that the United States is developing is focused primarily on countering "rogue nation" threats and will not be capable of countering Russia's nuclear deterrent. According to the President, the United States is "committed to meeting the growing danger that outlaw nations will develop and deploy long-range missiles that could deliver weapons of mass destruction."⁶¹ President Clinton has announced that he will make an NMD deployment decision in June 2000, based on the results of flight tests and other developmental efforts, cost estimates, threat evaluation, and a review of arms control objectives.

1. Criteria for making a Deployment Decision

a. Funding

Defense Secretary Cohen outlined the administration's program for handling NMD development, deployment, and associated political and diplomatic issues in a January 20, 1999, speech at the Pentagon. Secretary Cohen prefaced his remarks by stating that the administration had reached "four critical decisions" with regard to the national missile defense program. The first decision was that more funds would be

budgeted in the current and future defense budgets to pay for a possible NMD deployment. The Secretary acknowledged that national missile defense has been a long standing project of the Defense Department, but stated that “until now the DoD has not budgeted any funds to support a possible deployment.”⁶²

b. Assessment of the Threat

Second, citing the results of the “Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States,” led by former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Mr. Cohen acknowledged that a current ballistic missile threat existed and would only increase with time. According to the Commission’s July 15, 1998, Executive Summary, “concerted efforts by a number of overtly or potentially hostile nations to acquire ballistic missiles with biological or nuclear payloads pose a growing threat to the United States.”⁶³ Secretary Cohen called the findings of the Rumsfeld Commission “a sobering analysis of the nature of the threat.”⁶⁴ This finding was important in order for the administration to justify moving along in their deployment readiness program. This program has two key criteria that must be satisfied before a deployment decision can be made. There must be a threat present, and the technology needed to proceed with deployment must be sufficiently developed.

c. Arms Control Issues

The third NMD decision concerns the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. On several occasions officials in the administration, including the President himself, have underscored the importance of moving forward with limited NMD while at the same time “maintaining the ABM Treaty as the cornerstone of strategic stability.”⁶⁵ The administration has tried to make this point clear both to members of Congress and the international community. In a February 24, 1999, appearance before the Senate Foreign

Relations Committee, Secretary of State Madeline Albright testified that "a decision regarding NMD deployment must also be addressed within the context of the ABM Treaty."⁶⁶ Secretary Albright also assured the committee members that she "made it clear to Russian leaders that deployment of a limited NMD that required amendments to the ABM Treaty would not be incompatible with the underlying principles of that Treaty."⁶⁷

At present the United States NMD policy is being conducted within the terms of the ABM Treaty.⁶⁸ Modifications to the Treaty, however, will be needed if the President chooses to move forward with an NMD deployment. Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs John Holum has taken the position that it is possible to design a limited national missile defense that would not interfere with the basic principles of the ABM Treaty. The Undersecretary further believes that the ABM Treaty is a "flexible, living document that should be susceptible to modification as the international environment changes."⁶⁹ He believes that just as the ABM Treaty was modified "in the case of demarcation between theater and national missile defense," it can be changed "to accommodate this new concern."⁷⁰

d. Deployment Date

The fourth NMD decision reached by the administration was to delay the projected deployment date until 2005. The change from a 2003 date is designed "to maximize the probability of programmatic success and to be able to deploy a technologically capable system as quickly as possible."⁷¹ This shift is in response to concern that the program is moving ahead too quickly and is not allowing enough time for a thorough testing process to take place. Many of these concerns were outlined in a June 1998 General Accounting Office report entitled "National Missile Defense: Even

with Increased Funding Technical and Schedule Risks are High.” Completed when the DoD projected NMD deployment date was still 2003, it warns that “technical risks remain high for a fiscal year 2003 deployment even though the program has made technical progress.”⁷² This additional time will allow testing to be completed and prevent the program from “rushing to failure.”

2. European Response

It appears that assurances from Clinton administration officials may not have been enough for either the Russians or for America’s European allies. The European allies have used the ABM Treaty modification issue as an opening to interject their opinions on what originally began as a domestic political and bilateral international question. France, Germany, Norway, Denmark, and Great Britain have expressed concern over the United States plans to modify the ABM Treaty and move ahead with NMD. The fears and concerns of America’s European allies could be a major factor affecting President Clinton’s decision on whether or not to move ahead with NMD. The allies fear that U.S. NMD could weaken the political and military links between the United States and Europe and re-ignite a global arms race.

Many European allies, notably Germany and France, believe that the United States is exaggerating the threat posed by rogue states and view the plan as destabilizing. German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer commented that “there is no doubt that this would lead to split security standards within the NATO alliance.”⁷³ French officials have been equally vocal about their concerns, warning that such policies could “open a Pandora’s box that is in none of the allies’ interest.”⁷⁴ In an October 1999 speech to the French National Institute for Higher Defense Learning, French Premiere Lionel Jospin expressed many of the French concerns about U.S. proposals to amend the ABM Treaty

and move ahead with NMD. Premier Jospin warned of the creation of a new arms race, the slowing of the international arm control process, and the French "fear" regarding the development of antimissile defense programs.⁷⁵ Even though the French Premier conceded that the 1972 ABM Treaty was a bilateral agreement, he stated that "it is clear that this question cannot be dealt with solely within the bilateral Russian-U.S. framework."⁷⁶ According to a March 2000 article by Therese Delpech published in *Disarmament Diplomacy*, French concerns go beyond NATO and arms control.

Delpech, although not officially presenting the position of the French government, offers a unique perspective that the Clinton administration will need to consider when making an NMD deployment decision. Delpech questions the effectiveness of the proposed U.S. system, its justification, and finally, the strategic vision of the United States in utilizing such a system.⁷⁷ Although highly critical of the United States, the article raises some crucial points that are important when considering the European position. Delpech points out that Europeans, unlike Americans, believe that vulnerability is a "normal condition," and that being vulnerable has "always be part of their daily lives."⁷⁸ She also points out that the Europeans fear "de-coupling" at the same time that they fear too much American interference in their own affairs.⁷⁹ The German Foreign Minister also has expressed his concern that America will be less likely to defend European security if there is not equal vulnerability among potential U.S. and European targets. The third European issue that should be an American concern is the perception among "more than one European leader," that, when dealing with strategic problems, there is a growing trend in the United States to replace "negotiations and multilateral regulating instruments" with "technological solutions."⁸⁰

Perhaps more important and of greater concern to President Clinton than the objections of France and Germany, will be the hesitation, and in some cases outright objections, on the part of Great Britain concerning the United States proposed ABM treaty and NMD plan. Recent statements made by Great Britain's top officials and articles in the British press have both displayed a possible reluctance on the part of Great Britain to support the American initiative. There is fear in Britain that if the United States is allowed to upgrade its early warning radar site at Flyingdales in North Yorkshire, in order to aid in the tracking and destroying of enemy missiles, Britain could risk becoming the target of rogue states reprisals. Although the Blair government has not formally rejected U.S. proposals to use the existing site as part of a U.S. NMD system, it has not been as supportive as some Americans would like. Traditionally America has looked to Great Britain as its champion in Europe, serving as an advocate of American policies to the other European allies. In fact, in a recent interview, British Prime Minister Tony Blair described Britain's role in the Anglo-American relationship as helping "Europe understand where America is coming from."⁸¹

Blair appears to be torn between being an advocate of U.S. policies in Europe and being an advocate of British and European national security concerns. Recent statements by the Prime Minister on the ABM Treaty and U.S. NMD issues are examples of this dilemma. Blair has been quoted as saying that "there is an understanding...as to the threat the United States perceives and why it wants to take action," but also points out that "many people are very anxious to see the ABM Treaty maintained."⁸² According to the British press there is a fear in Britain that "a U.S. national antimissile system, which would require an amendment to the ABM Treaty...would unleash a new arms race."⁸³

Until the British position is clarified, it will be difficult for the Clinton administration to gauge what the effect of pursuing NMD will have on the Anglo-American alliance. There has been speculation that the U.S. missile shield should be shared with the British and other European allies, but the cost of such a plan and its effects on a future arms race have prevented any serious plans from being proposed.⁸⁴

The trans-Atlantic disagreements over the ABM treaty and the importance of missile defense reflect a difference in perception between the Europeans and the Americans. Even if in the end both sides agree to disagree on ABM/NMD issues, an amicable settlement must be reached to prevent compromising NATO effectiveness. According to David Gompert, former senior director of the National Security Council and now President of RAND Europe, "this trans-Atlantic schism could turn fatal to the alliance in the event of a violent conflict with a rogue state armed with weapons of mass destruction."⁸⁵ Because so much is at stake, the issue of ABM Treaty compliance no longer just involves Republican versus Democrat Congressional debates or U.S. versus Russia arms control negotiations for the Clinton administration, it now takes on the importance of all U.S. interests in Europe as well.

B. CONGRESSIONAL REPUBLICANS

In June 2000, the Clinton administration will be forced to weigh all of the factors involved and decided whether or not to deploy a limited NMD system. Some Republicans in both the House of Representatives and the Senate have criticized the administration for not pursuing a more robust NMD system. Republican efforts to force the Clinton administration to deploy a nationwide defense against ballistic missiles has been a key tenet in their defense policy since the party took control of Congress in 1995.

In February 1995, the Republicans brought to the House floor H.R.7, the national security portion of the of their "Contract With America." The Republicans pledged to deploy both a national missile defense as well as theater missile defense systems "as soon as practical."⁸⁶ In the House of Representatives, Republicans have had a difficult time getting their national defense plan through. In the 1995 debate, other portions of the Republican defense policy easily passed through Congress while their NMD deployment plan was defeated. The only victory that the House Republicans could claim was that they added increased NMD funding to future defense budgets.

On the Senate side, Republicans in the Senate Armed Services Committee united in support of the "Missile Defense Act of 1995." This was a twenty-page portion of the fiscal 1996 Defense Authorization bill that announced that it was U.S. policy to deploy multiple-site missile defenses by 2003. Along with strengthening the Act's language, they also increased funding for theater and national missile defenses. An amendment of note, offered on the Senate floor by Senator William Cohen (R-ME,) expressed the sense of Congress that a multi-site deployment policy could be carried out through means consistent with the ABM Treaty, and urged negotiations with Russia to modify the Treaty. This amendment, along with subsequent bipartisan negotiation, allowed the bill to pass 85-13. Even though the bill's language was changed, many Senate Republicans viewed it as a victory. Senator Strom Thurmond (R-SC,) after the bills passing, commented "we are clearly on the path to developing a multi-site NMD system."⁸⁷

After the bill passed in the Senate, a conference committee was convened to iron out the differences in the legislation between the two chambers. The committee increased the funding for ballistic missile defense and required the Pentagon to deploy a

NMD system capable of protecting all fifty states by the year 2003. Both chambers approved the conference report and the bill was sent to the President. Citing that the missile defense provision would jeopardize the START agreements, the President vetoed the bill. In January 1996 a new conference report, which left out the NMD mandate, was submitted, and the President signed the new report into law on February 10, 1996.⁸⁸

During 1996 and 1997, the Republican-led Congress and the administration compromised on ballistic missile defense issues. Funds were added to the administration BMD budget requests, but no new language mandating an NMD deployment was introduced. At times Republican leaders threatened to introduce NMD legislation and move forward with a 2003 deployment mandate, but they never acted on their threats.

The president's Republican critics believe that a series of incidents during 1998 highlighted emerging threats and may catalyze public support for NMD. In May 1998, India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons. In the summer of 1998, North Korea, Pakistan, and Iran tested new ballistic missiles that, while not able to reach North America, demonstrated a growing sophistication in missile design. In spite of the Clinton administration's January 20, 1999, announcement, Congress, led by the Republican leadership and pro-defense Democrats, moved forward with their own plan for ensuring NMD deployment.

On February 4, 1999, Congressman Curt Weldon (R-PA) held a news conference to announce what he called a bipartisan congressional effort to commit the United States "to deploy a national missile defense system."⁸⁹ The congressman pledged that 1999 would be the year in which Congress would act on an NMD deployment mandate and send a clear message to the country's "rogue threats." He announced that this

“commitment sends a clear message to countries like North Korea that we are not going to be held hostage.”⁹⁰ The Congressional Republican push for an NMD deployment was also carried out by the Senate Republicans.

In a February 24, 1999, letter to President Clinton, Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC,) chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, asked that the President provide evidence to contradict the contention of Republicans that the 1972 ABM Treaty is moribund.⁹¹ This letter followed up a January 22, 1999, Opinion Editorial in the *Wall Street Journal*. In this editorial Senator Helms opined that “we do not need to renegotiate the ABM Treaty to build and deploy national missile defense...we can do it today...the ABM Treaty is dead...it died when our treaty partner, the Soviet Union, ceased to exist.”⁹² Senator Helms contends that since the President has not submitted the new protocols, which would expand the ABM Treaty to include Russia and the other post-Soviet states, to the Senate for its advice and consent, the United States is not bound by the Cold War treaty. Accompanying his letter to the President, Senator Helms included a memorandum prepared by attorneys George Micron and Douglas Feith for the Washington-based Center for Security Policy, which reinforces the Senator’s claim that the ABM Treaty died with the demise of the Soviet Union.⁹³

Both Congressman Weldon and Senator Helms were instrumental in the events that followed over the next several months. On the same day that Senator Helms sent his letter to the President, by a vote of fifty to three, the House Armed Services Committee approved a measure cosponsored by Congressman Weldon that declared it a goal of the U.S. to deploy national missile defenses. A little over two weeks later, the Senate voted 97 to 3 to commit the United States to deploy a national anti-missile defense system. The

next day the House followed suit and, by a vote of 317 to 105, approved the Weldon Bill. Both bills went through conference committee and the final version, which included softer language than the original Weldon Bill, was sent to the President for his consideration. On June 29, 1999, President Clinton signed the National Missile Defense Act making it policy to deploy an NMD system as soon as technologically feasible. Even though the bill signed into law included weaker language and called for continued arms control talks with the Russians, the Republicans had succeeded where they had failed in 1995. They had forced President Clinton to sign into law a commitment to national missile defense.

Perhaps the best explanation of the Republican rationale for pushing forward with limited NMD and for questioning the validity of the ABM Treaty comes from Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS), co-sponsor of the Senate NMD bill. In a March 25, 1999, breakfast speech focused on NMD and sponsored by the National Defense University, Senator Cochran said that a final deployment decision "should be taken with speed and with system effectiveness in mind."⁹⁴ In his speech he recognized that since "each Party undertakes not to deploy systems for a defense of the territory of its country, there are obvious conflicts between the ABM Treaty and an NMD deployment."⁹⁵ The Senator went on say that the ABM Treaty is a companion to the arms limitation and reduction treaties, and, while each of these processes has evolved over the years, "the ABM Treaty had never been updated."⁹⁶ Congressional Republicans and their supporters believe that the United States should not delay deploying national missile defense. They believe that the Russians should be pushed to make the needed changes in the treaty to reflect the changes in the international security environment. In the event that no compromise can

be reached, according to Senator Helms, the United States should “toss it into the dustbin of history and thereby clear the way to build national missile defense.”⁹⁷

C. POSITION OF THOSE OPPOSING NMD

The limited support of the Clinton administration for NMD and the pro-NMD position of the Republicans have caused concern within the arms control community. The arms control establishment opposes the deployment of a limited NMD system because it demands a change to the 1972 ABM Treaty. They believe that the ABM Treaty is necessary for achieving deeper nuclear arms reduction. If Russia believes that its nuclear forces will be overwhelmed by ballistic missile defenses, “it will be less likely to reduce those forces.”⁹⁸ So long as Russians believe that they have the ability to achieve “acceptable damage,” they probably will be more inclined to cut their nuclear warheads. National Security advisor Sandy Berger underscored this point when he commented that “there is no reason to believe that Russian political and military leaders will agree to sharply reduce strategic nuclear missiles in the absence of the ABM Treaty’s constraints.”⁹⁹ Those opposed to NMD rebuff the idea that the ABM Treaty has outlived its usefulness. Jack Mendelson, a member of the Arms Control Association, for example, has written “the ABM Treaty’s constraints on major anti-ballistic missile defensive deployments continue to be a key element in the willingness of the U.S. and Russia to accept significant reductions in their offensive forces.”¹⁰⁰

Opponents of missile defense believe that the key technical problems remain with national defenses, pointing out that even after 40 years the United States has not been able to develop a “workable defensive missile system.”¹⁰¹ They argue that recent testing of missile defenses has not yielded the appropriate successes to warrant moving forward with NMD deployment. John Issacs, President of the Council for a Livable World,

believes that "nobody can prove for sure that this technology works, just hitting a bullet with a bullet is very different from developing a workable defense shield."¹⁰² Mr. Isaacs further believes that "hitting a missile fired from Kwajalein missile range, when you know when its fired and where its fired, is very different than trying to anticipate a missile launch form Russia, China, or North Korea. According to John Pike, director of space policy at the Federation of America Scientists, "in 1972 we signed the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in recognition of our inability to construct workable anti-missile systems" and "we are no closer to a workable system today."¹⁰³

NMD opponents also argue that NMD would provide no defense against likely attacks on the United States. They argue that the likely methods of delivery have already been demonstrated at the World Trade Center in New York, the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, and the subway system in Tokyo. National leaders, including Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Harry Shelton, have recognized such threats. In an interview with *Sea Power Magazine*, General Shelton acknowledged that "there are other serious threats out there in addition to that posed by ballistic missiles."¹⁰⁴ There is a common fear among those in opposition to NMD that national defenses will only provide the American people with a false sense of security. Long-range missiles are more expensive and technically difficult to build and deploy than other delivery means. According to Isaacs, aside from the initial costs and deployment difficulties there are many reasons that another country is not gong to attack the U.S. with missiles, the most prominent being their fear of U.S. nuclear retaliation.

Those opposed to NMD view it as an overpriced, high risk program that has no guarantee of achieving its mission and runs the strong risk of setting U.S. arms control

back three decades. They believe that the ABM Treaty is quite clear in its prohibition of national defense systems and that to amend the treaty to allow for even a limited deployment would endanger international strategic stability. Destruction of the ABM Treaty would undermine the confidence of U.S. allies, sabotage non-proliferation efforts, and would make other nuclear powers less willing to enter into future nuclear reduction agreements.

D. SUPPORTERS OF A DEPLOYMENT DECISION DELAY

As the Clinton administration's self-imposed deadline looms closer, advocates and opponents of NMD have begun to ask for a delay in its deployment. Both groups cite technology problems with the interceptors, lack of allies' support, arms control issues, and deficiencies in overall system capabilities as reasons to postpone the decision. Former government officials President Jimmy Carter, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and former Secretary of Defense William Perry all believe that the NMD decision should be delayed. A bipartisan effort within the Congress to delay the NMD deployment also has begun.

Nebraska Senator Chuck Hagel, an advocate of NMD and a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, believes that the NMD deployment decision should not be made by the Clinton administration. In an April 16, 2000, letter to the *Washington Times*, Senator Hagel expressed his view that the decision should not be made by the Clinton administration and instead should be passed on to the next administration. According to Senator Hagel, "there will be dangerous consequences for America and the world if we [the United States] rush to meet arbitrary decision deadlines and leave one or more of the tracks incomplete."¹⁰⁵

In his letter, Hagel discusses the need for the NMD effort's "four parallel tracks" to all converge at the same point, these tracks being technology, cost, ally support, and Russian-American relations. Hagel believes that before a deployment decision should be made, NMD technology must be sufficiently developed; a better partnership with Congress over deployment and funding decisions should be forged; the concerns and suspicions of allies need to be addressed; and the reasons for pursuing NMD must be better explained to the Russians. According to Hagel, these requirements have not been met and the Clinton administration cannot achieve them in its time remaining. In his letter, Senator Hagel recommends that "the decision be put off until next year," allowing a new administration to decide "on when, how, and what to deploy."¹⁰⁶

Senator Joseph Biden from Delaware, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has joined Senator Hagel in calling for a deployment decision delay. In a March 2000 address to scientists at Stanford University, Senator Biden said he did not believe that the North Korean missile threat was sufficient to warrant a vastly expensive system that was not technically proven.¹⁰⁷ He also commented that he was concerned that deploying the system without resolving ABM Treaty issues would severely upset relations with Russia. Senator Biden, like Senator Hagel, is upset that the Congress has not been closely consulted on the deployment decision and believes that greater public debate is needed. According to Biden the system "is going to cost \$30 billion, and there has been no public debate, this [absent public debate] doesn't make sense."¹⁰⁸ Both Biden and Hagel have concerns with the Clinton proposed system and believe that their questions must be answered before the system's deployment is approved.

The debate within the United States has centered around four areas: the threat, feasibility of technology, arms control, and cost. Based on these factors, President Clinton has promised to make a deployment decision by the summer of 2000. A clear consensus on whether or not to deploy the Clinton system is not apparent. The Clinton administration and supporters of its NMD plan believe that their system is the best compromise that handles the emerging threat, while at the same time addressing Russian fears. Proponents of a more comprehensive system argue that the Clinton system is not robust, and will only be effective against today's threat, not against those likely to emerge in the future. Opponents of all forms of NMD argue that none of the deployment requirements have been satisfied and that an NMD system would not be an effective use of U.S. financial and political capital. Their main argument is that it would set arms control back three decades and risk major confrontation with the Russians.

Undoubtedly, this debate will continue to heat up and remain confrontational until a final deployment decision is made. As the United States decides whether or not to move forward, U.S.-Russian relations will surely be effected. The level of U.S.-Russian cooperation will play a major part in whether or not the U.S. decides to abrogate the ABM Treaty, and whether or not amendments can be made to satisfy both countries' concerns and allow U.S. NMD to be deployed.

IV. RUSSIAN STRATEGIC VIEWS ON NMD AND THE ABM TREATY

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia has tenaciously clung to its superpower status. This chapter describes the major Russian strategic schools of thought, examines Russia's position on ABM Treaty modification and proposed U.S. National Missile Defense, and identifies the strategic tenets of the January 2000 National Security Concept.

A. RUSSIAN STRATEGIC SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

1. Traditionalists

Within Russia there are two competing schools of strategic thinking. The traditionalist thinking "calls for the preservation of a strong emphasis on maintaining a military strategic balance with the United States."¹⁰⁹ Essentially this is the same thinking that was present during the Cold War. Traditionalists rely on existing bilateral agreements and treaties to maintain the status quo.¹¹⁰ Those who advocate a strict adherence to the ABM Treaty believe that any wavering on NMD would give the United States a strategic advantage. This school of strategic thinking continues to base relations with the United States on the principle of mutual assured destruction, which demands that both sides remain vulnerable to the other's nuclear attack. In a November 1996 address to the Federal Assembly, Russian President Boris Yeltsin supported this school of thought. Yeltsin declared that "the Russian Federation is determined to adhere strictly to existing and future treaties in strategic offensive weapons and antiballistic missile defense, and it is ready to continue further reductions of its nuclear weapons on a bilateral basis with the United States, while maintaining the balance of strategic weapons as a guarantee against the return to global opposition of forces and the race of arms."¹¹¹ In accordance with the traditionalist perspective, there exists an inextricable link between offensive and

defensive strategic weapons; consequently any move towards reduction of offensive weapons can only be done if both sides abide by the provisions of the ABM treaty. Allowing the United States to move forward with NMD is viewed by the traditionalists as a curtailing of Russia's offensive capability, thus lessening American vulnerability to retaliation. Traditionalists are convinced that the United States is determined to withdraw from the ABM treaty and move towards acquiring absolute protection from enemy missile attack. They view even limited U.S. NMD as dangerous to Russian nuclear security.

2. Moderates

Moderates recognize that the Cold War is over and "the virtual disappearance of the threat of American nuclear attack against Russia."¹¹² Proponents of moderate thinking realize that parity is not possible and believe that the balance of forces will shift.¹¹³ They recommend that Russia strive towards a level of reasonable sufficiency, which entails maintaining a force structure that would allow Russia to deliver unacceptable damage in a retaliatory strike.¹¹⁴ Moderates maintain that Russia should "abandon the idea of possessing nuclear potential that would be numerically equal to the aggregate potential of all other nuclear powers."¹¹⁵ According to Ivan Safachuk, a Russian author who has written on post-Cold War disarmament, "the concept of [quantitative] parity is irrational, the countervalue strike should be recognized as the only possible nuclear strike that Russia may deliver."¹¹⁶ Although their views on nuclear force structure differ, the moderates share the same view as the traditionalists on the effects of U.S. national missile defense.

3. Shared View

Traditionalists and moderates believe that the United States is masking its true goals. Both groups remain perplexed by the Clinton administration's calls for maintaining the ABM Treaty, albeit with revisions, and pursuing development of a system for national missile defense against limited attacks. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov recently commented "we heard a lot of various contradictory statements on the part of the U.S. administration, [we] must clarify the administration's real approach to the ABM Treaty."¹¹⁷ Russians remain suspicious of the United States plan to deploy a limited NMD system based at sites in Alaska and North Dakota that would be able to provide protection to all fifty states. They see no difference in the levels of NMD, whether it is a limited system to combat a rogue threat or a comprehensive system like SDI. Therefore, both traditionalists and moderates view any NMD plan as a violation of the ABM Treaty.

B. VIEWS ON ABM TREATY MODIFICATION AND U.S. NMD

Russia's official position on the ABM Treaty is that it is "the cornerstone of strategic stability and therefore any attempt to modify it would destroy the foundations of U.S.-Russian nuclear arms control."¹¹⁸ Although many Russians argue that this has always been their position, Pavel Podvig, a Russian scholar with the Center for Arms Control at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology disagrees. Podvig points out that in the first fifteen years of the treaty's history it was the Soviet Union that pushed the envelope of treaty regulations, causing the United States to raise questions repeatedly about Soviet compliance with the treaty.¹¹⁹ It was these problems and questions over specific parts of the treaty that caused the two sides to negotiate and sign a number of agreed statements that made the treaty easier to understand and enforce.

Once Ronald Reagan was elected president and introduced the Strategic Defense Initiative in March of 1983, it would be the Soviets who would cry that the treaty's envelope of regulations and restrictions were being stretched. The Americans countered and accused the Soviets of a number of treaty violations, including the establishment of an early warning radar at Krasnoyarsk.¹²⁰ A few years later the first talks of a "broad" interpretation of the treaty's principles and restrictions was proposed by the Americans. The Americans suggested both sides be allowed to develop and test systems based on "other physical principles" not addressed by the treaty.¹²¹ Prior to the 1980s, the Americans had rejected such liberal interpretations of the treaty due to the belief that the Soviets had the technical advantage in developing and testing ABM system technology. The Soviets rejected the American suggestion of broad interpretation and eventually U.S. officials dropped the idea.

As the Cold War ended, the United States and the Soviet Union were again discussing missile defense and the ABM Treaty. This time both sides were talking about cooperation. The United States had shifted its BMD focus from countering a massive Soviet ballistic missile threat to dealing with a limited threat posed by rogue nations or an accidental Soviet launch. This concern was later reinforced by the events that took place during the August 1991 attempted coup in the Soviet Union, when it was confirmed that "the authority over strategic forces was unclear for several days."¹²² The Americans proposed that both the United States and the Soviet Union cooperate on developing a limited global BMD system to counter emerging threats to the security of both countries. According to Podvig, "neither the limited nature of the suggested defense system nor the call for cooperation was news to the Soviet leadership."¹²³ Such proposals had never

been taken seriously because the Soviets believed that no defense would ever be limited and no U.S. proposal could be taken seriously.¹²⁴ This time, however, Soviet President Gorbachev broke with the long-standing policy of denying cooperation and agreed to discuss possible cooperation on non-nuclear ABM systems. President Gorbachev's decision to explore cooperative BMD efforts, although initially met with skepticism, was embraced by several members of the Soviet Foreign Ministry and military. Both groups began to wonder what the strategic picture would look like if weapons of mass destruction fell into the hands of third world militaries. A statement by Chief of the Main Staff of the Soviet Strategic Rocket Forces Col. Gen. Kochemasov captured the concerns of many military officers and diplomats when he asked; "say nuclear missile weapons fall into the hands of irresponsible, incompetent people. What then? Any use of such weapons could provoke World War III. That is a terrible danger."¹²⁵

Even as the Soviet Union collapsed and Russian President Yeltsin replaced Soviet President Gorbachev, the new Russian Federation's position did not change dramatically from that of the old regime. In June 1992, President Yeltsin signed a Joint U.S.-Russian Statement that gave priority to exploring "possible changes to existing treaties and agreements" in order to move forward on joint projects "to explore the role for defenses against limited ballistic missiles attacks."¹²⁶ Not long after this statement was signed, Russia began to explore the possibility of building a joint system. This plan was seen by many in industry as a way to revive the faltering Russian space and technology sector while at the same time continuing to improve relations with the West. As the idea became feasible, the two sides began to consider making changes to existing treaties to make the cooperative effort legal. Although it is doubtful that the Russians would admit it

now, it appeared that the ABM treaty would be modified to allow for such systems to be tested and deployed.

The process soon stalled, because the two sides could not agree on a number of key issues. Issues like TMD demarcation, NATO expansion, and NATO intervention into the former Yugoslavia severely strained U.S.-Russian relations, making cooperation almost impossible. As it became apparent to both sides that cooperation on BMD systems was unlikely, the United States decided to move forward unilaterally with a BMD system capable of providing limited homeland defense. On January 20 1999, the Clinton administration announced that it would begin exploring the possibility of deploying a limited NMD system.

Russian government and military officials were quick to voice their concern about the U.S. call for ABM Treaty amendments. Both government and military officials have said that amending the treaty to allow for the proposed U.S. system would “bring down the entire system of strategic stability in the world.”¹²⁷ Currently the Russians have shown no signs that they are willing to allow any treaty amendments. In a November 1999 meeting with President Clinton, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin delivered a message from the Russian President which warned that a collapse of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, resulting from the deployment of a U.S. NMD system, would have extremely dangerous consequences for the entire arms control process.¹²⁸ The statement did not specify exactly what the “extremely dangerous” consequences would be, but went on to say that although only a few countries have taken part in the ABM treaty, it concerns the security interests of all states. This statement shows the integration of both traditionalist and moderate strategic thinking. Obviously the traditionalist would support

maintaining status quo arms control policies, which were based on Cold War assumptions of Soviet and American nuclear force capabilities. The moderates accept the new strategic reality, but point to the destabilizing effects that treaty modifications could have on the new multipolar world. The Russian fear is that changes to the treaty would result in an offensive versus defensive arms race, not just between the Russians and the Americans, but among all nuclear powers. Yeltsin's letter captured many of the same points that were advanced by Marshal Grechko, Soviet Defense Minister in 1972, just after the SALT I and ABM Treaty talks were concluded. Grechko wrote that the treaty prevented "the emergence of a chain reaction of competition between offensive and defensive arms."¹²⁹

The Yeltsin letter to Clinton conveyed Russia's toughest message on ABM Treaty modification to date. In the past President Yeltsin had shown a willingness to work with Americans on missile defense issues by leaving the idea of joint U.S.-Russian cooperation of ABM modification and global NMD open for future discussion. Even as recently as June 1999, when the two Presidents met in Cologne, it appeared that President Yeltsin was willing to discuss possible ABM Treaty modification in return for further strategic arms reductions. These agreements were outlined in the Joint Statement issued concerning strategic offensive and defensive arms, in which the two sides agreed that discussions on START III and the ABM Treaty would begin later in the summer of 1999.¹³⁰

As President Yeltsin's willingness to cooperate on ABM issues decreased, the two sides soon fell into a deadlock. According to Vladimir Rakhmanin, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, even though the Russians have agreed to meet with U.S. officials to

discuss the situation, "one should not identify Russia's consent to the holding of such discussions with consent to an 'adaptation' of the ABM Treaty."¹³¹ In an October 1999 address, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov announced "there is no and cannot be any bargaining with the Americans over Anti-Ballistic Missile Defense."¹³² The Russians fear that the U.S. push for NMD is just another example of how the U.S. and NATO are attempting to build a one-sided world order. In a March 2000 address to the CIS Council of Defense Ministers, Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov commented "there is evidently a striving on the part of the USA and its allies in NATO to build a one-sided model serving solely their interests."¹³³ The toughest diplomatic action by Russia to date has been to cosponsor and introduce, along with Belarus and China, a resolution to the United Nations General Assembly's First Committee, a committee on disarmament and international security. The resolution called for renewed efforts by each of the treaty's parties to preserve and strengthen the treaty through full and strict compliance. It also called for the parties to limit the deployment of ABM systems and to refrain from the deployment of such systems intended for the defense of its country's territory. On November 5, 1999, by a vote of 54 in favor to 4 against and 73 abstentions, the resolution passed.

According to Alexander Pikayev, a scholar with the Carnegie Moscow Center, the reasons for the deadlock on treaty negotiations and overall Russian objection to U.S. limited NMD can be explained by a variety of factors. Russian officials are not convinced that ABM Treaty modification is needed to handle the "potential and limited missile threats" from rogue states such as North Korea.¹³⁴ According to Vladimir Petrovsky, a member of the Russian Academy of Military Sciences, "Nobody has hitherto

proved sufficiently, reliably and convincingly that North Korea really does possess missile potential and is capable of threatening the United States.”¹³⁵ This is why the military believes that systems already in line with the treaty, like the U.S. Navy’s proposed theater wide missile system or the U.S. Army’s THAAD system could be deployed to the region to sufficiently handle the “limited threat.”

Russian officials believed that the 1997 demarcation agreements, which increased the allowed speed of theater missile interceptors, was a significant concession that gave the Americans “very high ceilings for permitted tests.”¹³⁶ It even appears that some Russians would be willing to allow the United States to explore new TMD systems as an alternative to pursuing NMD. In the March 3-16 issue of *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye*, Vadim Solovyev suggested that the United States invest in systems designed to intercept ICBM during the boost phase. According to Solovyev, such a system could be “installed on a missile armed aircraft or unmanned aerial vehicles patrolling near a missile launch, either constantly or in times of crisis.”¹³⁷ Such a plan is similar to what the United States Air Force is attempting to accomplish with its Airborne Laser Program. The goal is to fit a Boeing 747 with a laser capable of limited BMD. Deployment of this system, however, is still several years off. Experts in the United States insist that TMD and NMD are two independent missions, each requiring its own platforms.

The Russian fear is that such concessions will allow the United States to turn a robust TMD program into the base of a comprehensive NMD system. There are suspicions in Russia that the United States is using the rogue threat as an excuse to begin a program that has greater aims in mind.¹³⁸ According to U.S. officials, the current U.S. plan for “limited” NMD is designed to face a limited number of warheads from rogue

state threats. The February 25-March 01 2000 edition of *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye* disagreed, stating that the plan specifically references the radar capability of the proposed new systems, or radar system upgrades, in Great Britain, Greenland, Alaska, and North Dakota. They believe that “after modernization, the technical possibilities of the system controlling ABM combat activities will be precisely those necessary for a missile defense system aimed at Russia and China.”¹³⁹ In preparation for such moves by the United States, the Russian Military has promised to “respond appropriately” and take measures to commensurate with the situation taking shape.¹⁴⁰

Supreme Commander of the Russian Strategic Missile Forces, Colonel General Vladimir Yakovlev, announced in an October 5, 1999, press conference that in “purely military terms” Russia will take “countermeasures” against any NMD system that the United States might deploy. Yakovlev also stated that “two dozen measures are under consideration, which Russia can put into practice without significantly increasing expenditures.”¹⁴¹ Perhaps one such response was demonstrated by Russia’s November 2, 1999, testing of a short-range interceptor missile fired from the Russian Sary-Shagan range, which is located on the territory of Kazakhstan. The test missile was among those installed in the Moscow ABM system, built around the capital in the Soviet era and allowed by the ABM Treaty. The missile test firing has been the only definitive military action that has been reported to date.

Russian domestic politics also complicates negotiations with the United States over revising the ABM Treaty. In his February 2000 “Program on New Approaches to Russian Security” Policy Memo, Pikayev pointed out that in the past, U.S.-Russian deadlocks over bilateral agreements would have been solved during summits. This was

no longer possible because the strain on U.S.-Russian relations has prevented Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin from building on their strong friendship and record for compromise. Domestic scandals that linked Yeltsin's regime to money laundering by western banks, disagreement over NATO involvement in Kosovo, and western criticism of the Russian campaign in Chechnya have caused Yeltsin to become increasingly anti-Western.¹⁴²

Pikayev asserts that the early resignation of Yeltsin "deprived Washington of a Russian leader firmly committed to cooperation with the West."¹⁴³ He further asserts that it is not surprising that Vladimir Putin, Yeltsin's chosen successor, has chosen to disassociate himself from the pro-western policy of the early Yeltsin administration.¹⁴⁴ It is not appropriate to classify Putin's first weeks and months as President as "anti-Western," but rather it is more appropriate to call his policies "not as pro-Western" than those of his predecessor. He has allowed the military greater influence over arms control issues and aggressively carried out the war in Chechnya despite strong western criticism, but has been careful not to make any promises regarding ABM Treaty modification. It is not clear whether these actions are part of a larger "Putin plan" or whether they are simply part of election politics. Many have viewed this change as a purely political move aimed at influencing Duma and presidential politics, so that supporters of the regime would be successful. What is clear is that Vladimir Putin's "not as pro-Western" actions have captured popular sentiment regarding ABM/NMD issues.

Members of the Russian State Duma have also expressed their concern with U.S. actions that point towards future NMD deployment. Roman Popkovich, former head of the State Duma Defense committee, agrees with plans to respond militarily if the U.S. deploys an NMD system. In October 1999, Mr. Popkovich told a Russian news agency

that "Russia should develop totally new offensive weapons and means to get the better of the U.S. anti-missile defense in order to reach parity."¹⁴⁵ The new head of the Defense Committee has taken a more moderate tone than that of his predecessor. In a March 2000 defense committee document, Andrey Nikolayev put forward an initiative to establish closer cooperation between the Russian Federal Assembly, including the State Duma, and the U.S. Congress.¹⁴⁶ While encouraging exchange programs so that legislators could better understand the others position on important international issues, the chairman also noted that any violation of the ABM Treaty was unacceptable to Russia. He added further that if the United States implements its proposed NMD, a whole set of agreements aimed at ensuring international security would be jeopardized.¹⁴⁷

Former Chairman of the Russian Duma Committee for International Affairs Vladimir Lukin is of the opinion that if the United States withdraws from the ABM Treaty, Russia will have to increase spending to perfect the system of dealing with anti-missile defense. According to Lukin, if Russia does not succeed in preventing the United States from deploying its limited NMD system, Russia "will have to respond asymmetrically."¹⁴⁸ The Duma's Communist Party faction also was upset over calls by the United States to amend the ABM Treaty. In a statement released on October 6, 1999, the Communists stated that attempts by the United States to amend the ABM Treaty "will not remain unanswered in Russia." Most of the rhetoric from Duma members came just prior to the December 1999 State Duma election and there has been considerably less talk reported in both the American and Russian press since the conclusion of the campaign.

Although the new millenium brought Russia a new president, in the early months of 2000 the U.S. and Russia appeared no closer to compromise, even though overall relations did appear to be mending. After concluding talks with American Secretary of State Madeline Albright, Foreign Minister Ivanov repeated the Russian position on ABM treaty modification. He remarked that "we have been telling our American partners that the modification of the ABM treaty might undermine the agreement...we are sure that we together could find other answers to those threats from third countries." After this statement, and a number of other similar ones made by military and Foreign Ministry personnel, several conflicting reports began to surface in both the Russian and American media speculating on the possibility of an agreement on ABM Treaty modifications.

One such story was run in the *Russia Journal*, an online weekly that tracks Russian social and political stories of interest. The story, released on March 03 2000, reported that Acting Russian President Vladimir Putin wanted to send a message to the West that "it is possible to reach agreement with him even on the thorniest security issues."¹⁴⁹ According to the article this was the reason for Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Ivanov's late February 2000 visit to Washington. Alexander Golts reported that Secretary Ivanov "brought up the controversial ABM Treaty issue and made it clear that Moscow was ready to consider a compromise solution."¹⁵⁰ The following day the Rueters News Agency reported that Russia had announced that "it had ruled out any discussions on changing the ABM Treaty."¹⁵¹

Within Russia there have been a few signs that moderate thinking is beginning to take hold. Within the Russian press there have been a few articles by experts and scholars either calling for compromise or hinting that compromise is possible. Russian

academician V. N. Tsygichko, of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, and A. A. Piontkovskiy, director of the Center for strategic Studies of Russian Academy of Sciences, believe that Russia has a lot to gain by cooperating with the United States on ABM Treaty and NMD issues. Their thinking seems to be in line with that of policy-makers of the early nineties, who were supportive of the U.S. proposed GPALS effort. According to their December 1999 article in *Voyennaya Mysl*, "a line towards consultations and constructive cooperation in creating a limited missile defense is enormously more promising and is in the interests of Russia's National Security."¹⁵² The article addresses many of Russia's concerns and concludes that in the end ABM Treaty modifications will not be destabilizing. In fact, the two view the possible changes as adding to Russian strategic stability. They believe that even with limited NMD capabilities, the theory of "MAD-stability" will remain the dominant strategic paradigm and that, through cooperation and the sharing of technology, Russia would be able to counter many of its own rogue threats. The article goes on to discuss specific verification processes and technology transfer policies that could make this idea possible. Such thinking is not widely popular in Russia and represents the views of only a small group of scientific and strategic thinkers.

C. RUSSIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY CONCEPT

Russia's January 2000 national security blueprint entitled "Concept of National Security" is a document that lays out Russia's "views on ensuring the security of the individual, society, and the state from external and internal threats in all spheres of life in the Russian Federation."¹⁵³ The concept paper outlines Russia's place in the world, Russian national interests, threats to national security, and basic tasks in ensuring national security. Due to Russia's current economic situation, many stated policies can not be

implemented. The interests and national concerns outlined in the concept help to better explain many of the ABM Treaty and NMD questions that the United States and Russia have yet to resolve and that have been discussed in the sections above.

The Russian concept paper states that there are two trends dominating international relations. The first is a move towards a true multilateral international system in which there has been a "strengthening of economic and political positions of a considerable number of states and their integration associations."¹⁵⁴ The second trend is a move by the United States and other Western countries to create a structure of international relations based on domination and set on the use of military force to provide unilateral solutions to key global political problems in violation of international law.¹⁵⁵ Russia states very clearly that it supports the first trend and will "facilitate the development of an ideology of the creation of a multipolar world."¹⁵⁶ Russia's view of the world community clearly demonstrates a combination of both traditionalist and moderate thinking. Russia's endorsement of the first trend, a trend of multilateralism, shows Russia's acknowledgment of its new diminished role in the international system. It is doubtful that the moderates are overly pleased with Russia's new role, nevertheless, they accept it and, as mentioned above, believe that future plans should be based on that reality. The second trend is closer to traditionalist thinking. Traditionalists are more likely to be concerned with U.S. and NATO dominance and still look at the West as their main competitor. Both groups of thinkers have found fault with the United States push for limited NMD.

The second and third chapters of the concept outline Russia's national interests, as well as threats to those interests. It is vital for Russia to ensure its sovereignty and

reinforce "the position of Russia as a great power and one of the influential centers of the multipolar world."¹⁵⁷ Russia views the trend of the United States and NATO to attempt to create a unilateral structure of international political and military relations as a threat to their international interests. Many of the same points made concerning Russia's world-view apply to Russia's international interests and perceived threats. The moderates are more accepting of the changes that have led the world towards multilateralism, but when threatened tend to side with the traditionalists, who still believe that Russia must remain a great power and should repel western influence in the Russian "near abroad." It is easy to see why on ABM Treaty and NMD issues, both groups support the status quo. To both groups, a United States that is invulnerable to enemy ballistic missile attack, jeopardizes moves toward multilateral relations and potentially jeopardizes Russia's role as a great power.

From the purely strategic standpoint, both traditionalist and moderates worry that a future U.S. NMD system could deny Russia an appropriate first or second strike capability and therefore deny them the ability to prevent military aggression. Although moderates like V. N. Tsygichko and A. A. Piontkovskiy might argue that by viewing NATO as Russia's main threat and not cooperating with the United States on NMD issues, they are missing the opportunity to share NMD technology. By not taking advantage of such technology, Russia would be limiting its ability to protect itself against its own limited ballistic missile threats. As long as Russia bases its strategy and doctrine on the traditional Cold War idea of repelling Western aggression, it is not likely to view ABM Treaty modifications and limited NMD in a positive light. But if the full scope of

threats to Russia were considered, U.S.-Russian cooperation on NMD might fit in line with Russia's stated interests

U.S. requests to amend the ABM Treaty and possible NMD deployment have gotten Russia's attention. It appears as though the entire Russian leadership is demanding that the status quo security arrangement is maintained and ABM Treaty remains unchanged. As sour a pill as it may be to swallow, the Russians must accept that the United States does have the upper hand. At some point the Russians need to get past all of the anti-Western and "we want remain a global superpower" rhetoric and decide if there is something to gain out of a possible compromise. The wise and prudent move would be to protect the chance for future strategic arms reduction so that they can reliably count on their nuclear arsenal as a means of receiving international power and prestige until they are able to make needed political, economic, and social reforms. Calls for military action or asymmetric responses make good sound bytes for politicians who want to seem tough on U.S. NMD during election time and who are continuing to balk at the negotiating table, but will only work for so long. Russia runs the risk of a possible United States withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and NMD negotiation process. It would appear that a more prudent strategy for the Russians would be to cut themselves a favorable deal on possible NMD cooperation, inspection rights, and terms for future strategic arms reduction treaties. If such an opportunity is missed and Russia makes use of its limited assets to act on its threats and respond militarily, then many of the Russian policy makers will be correct and an entire system of arms control agreements could be effected. Even though many experts believe that the Russian economy could not sustain the military

expenditures needed to develop decoys or to restart the "missile works," the mere threat jeopardizes current and future arms reduction treaties.

V. IMPLICATIONS FOR START

When the debate about whether or not the United States and Russia could agree on amendments to the ABM Treaty first took shape, it appeared that only the delayed fate of START II and the fate of future START agreements were relative to the debate. But in light of the souring of U.S.-Russian relations following Operation "Desert Fox" and the NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo, the fate of START agreements are uncertain. Recent statements by Russian political and military figures have now called into question Russia's intention to abide by the agreements codified in START I.

A. START I

The principal objective in strategic arms control is to increase stability at significantly lower levels of nuclear weapons. START I was an equitable and effectively verifiable agreement that reduced the number of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and warheads. Overall strategic nuclear forces were to be reduced by 30-40 percent, with a reduction of as much as 50 percent in the most threatening systems, a total of over 9,000 warheads. START I required reductions in strategic offensive arms to equal aggregate levels, from a high of some 10,500 in each arsenal. The Treaty's central limits include: 1,600 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles, 6,000 accountable warheads, 4,900 ballistic missile warheads, 1,540 warheads on 154 heavy ICBM's, and 1,100 warheads on mobile ICBM's.¹⁵⁸ While the Treaty calls for these reductions to be carried out over seven years, in practice all the Lisbon Protocol signatories have already been deactivating and eliminating systems covered by the agreement. By June 2000, the full implementation of the START I Treaty had not yet been achieved.

According to reports published in the March 1999 *Arms Control Today*, the Russians have been moving towards START I codified reductions over the last nine

years.¹⁵⁹ Calls by Russian officials to take symmetrical retaliatory measures and to “remove restrictions under the START treaties” in response to U.S. proposals to amend the ABM Treaty and move forward with limited NMD, jeopardizes future reduction progress and the utility of the START I agreement. Russian General Yakovlev is among the many Russian leaders who have threatened that if the U.S. abrogates the ABM Treaty, Russia will abandon the START process.¹⁶⁰ In discussing possible “countermeasures” that Russia could take in response to an American NMD, General Yakovlev was quoted by Interfax News Agency as saying, “the Topol missile complex has a number of possibilities currently limited by understandings linked with START I. We can abandon these limitations and change Topol both in the sphere of ABM penetration and in its missiles combat possibilities.”¹⁶¹

If the Russians decide to move ahead with such countermeasures, START will be further complicated. Aside from the START I problems caused by the proposed Russian “countermeasures” to U.S. NMD, in a interview conducted in January 1999, Russian officials accused the U.S. of “noncompliance with certain provisions of the START I Treaty.”¹⁶² The result of both situations is that unless an NMD/ABM Treaty compromise is reached or relations are mended, START I reductions might be in jeopardy of either falling farther behind or not being carried out at all. Such results would further hinder the chances of START II reductions actually being implemented and the negotiation of future START agreements.

B. START II

The START II Treaty was negotiated by the United States and Russia between 1991 and 1992 and submitted to the United States Senate by President George Bush

following signature on January 3, 1993. The treaty states, that by December 31, 2007, both the United States and Russia are to deploy no more than 3000 to 3500 strategic nuclear warheads on ICBM's, SLBMs, and heavy bombers. START II builds upon START I and provides that all START I provisions will pertain, except as explicitly modified in the new treaty. The treaty was ratified by the U.S. Senate in 1996, but was not approved by the Russian State Duma until April 2000.

The START II issue had been a controversial one for Russian lawmakers. Because of domestic political disputes between the executive and legislative branches, and international disputes with the United States and NATO, it took the Russian State Duma more than seven years to ratify the treaty. Several times in recent years the Duma appeared to be close to ratifying the agreement, but because of their objections to the U.S.-led Operation Desert Fox in Iraq, NATO actions in Kosovo, and western criticism over Russian operations in Chechnya, the Duma postponed the treaty's ratification. The Communists and their hard-line allies, who dominated the parliament prior to the December 1999 elections, repeatedly rejected the START II treaty, further irritating U.S.-Russian relations. During the late summer and early autumn months of 1999, even in light of the fact that post-Kosovo U.S.-Russian relations appeared to be on the mend, START II ratification was again sidetracked.

As a result of U.S. NMD efforts, the fate of not only the ABM Treaty became questioned, but so too did that of START II. Because of the fallout over U.S. NMD, some Russian scholars, who had previously criticized law makers for delaying START II ratification, began to call for its continued postponement as a means of countering U.S. NMD advances. A February 2000 article in the *Moscow Nezavisimaya Gazeta* summed

up some of the Russian arguments against ratifying START II. First the article pointed out that the treaty was negotiated and signed during a different era in U.S.-Russian relations. It pointed to current disputes over "NATO expansion, Kosovo, Iraq, Iran, the Caspian pipelines, [and] arms control," and questioned whether or not U.S.-Russian relations have changed too dramatically for both countries to still, as Secretary of State Madeline Albright was quoted, "have enough common interests to overcome our differences and to work together."¹⁶³ The author, Sergey Rogov, believed that Russia should have held off on START II ratification until after the Clinton administration had announced its intentions on U.S. NMD and ABM Treaty modifications. Rogov was worried that if Russia ratified START II and the United States decided to move ahead with its NMD/ABM Treaty plans, Russia could find itself "either admitting it was bluffing and publicly capitulating or else embarking on a fierce confrontation with the United States."¹⁶⁴ According to Rogov, in the later instance "the entire regime of strategic arms control will collapse" and, any hope of better relations in the future will vanish.

Russian Scholar Pavel Podvig has written also about the possibilities that would be ahead for Russia if it did not ratify START II, or if it was forced to break from the START agreements because of a U.S. abrogation of the ABM treaty. According to Podvig it is "quite likely" that the United States will deploy an NMD system.¹⁶⁵ He believed that Russia seemed resolved to counter such a decision with "adequate measures," principally suspending strategic arms reductions at the START I level.¹⁶⁶ This possibility was considered during the START II ratification debate, but was generally discounted as unrealistic, since Russian strategic forces will mostly have

declined to levels much lower than those of START I. Russia currently has plans in the works to modernize and expand several of its nuclear delivery systems, including the SS-27 Topol-M single warhead ICBM, a new submarine launched ballistic missile to replace the R-39UTTH, and plans to negotiate the purchase of Tu-95 MS and Tu-160 bombers built in the Ukraine.¹⁶⁷ Although these plans may sound impressive, according to Podvig, Russia will still not be able to match U.S. strategic forces under START I and START II restrictions. Podvig optimistically estimated that the number of strategic warheads that Russia could deploy in 2008 is about 1300, on 300 Topol M ICBM's, seven Delta IV submarines, and about 80 bombers.¹⁶⁸

According to Podvig, if START II had not been ratified or Russia decides not follow certain provisions of the treaty, the situation would be different. Even though many of these missiles would reach the end of their service life by 2005, he believes that there would be enough exceptions to allow Russia "to sustain its land based missile force at levels higher than those allowed by the START II Treaty."¹⁶⁹ Podvig's analysis shows that although the set of options available to Russia is limited by its difficult economic conditions, it could keep its forces at the level of about 3000 warheads if it decided to keep its MIRVed land-based missile force. Contradicting Podvig's analysis are reports printed in the early months of 2000, by the western print media. According to many of these reports, leaks from U.S.-Russian discussions of possible START III numbers estimate the total number of warheads that Russia could maintain closer to 800 instead of 1300.¹⁷⁰ The articles also point out that Russia's economic future will determine the total number of warheads it could maintain, not any arm control agreement. Even if Podvig's numbers are overly optimistic and Russia has already agreed to and formally ratified the

START II Treaty, his analysis could become relevant if the United States abrogates the ABM Treaty and Russia decides that arms control has indeed collapsed.

Even though many Russians were uneasy about START II, the Russian government insisted that the treaty be ratified. Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has received both credit and blame for pushing START II ratification to forefront of the State Duma's legislative agenda, has stated that ratification of the treaty was necessary because Russia aims "to free the world of the stockpiles of surplus weapons."¹⁷¹ At the same time the Russian President stated Russia's intention to "preserve and strengthen the nuclear weapons complex of Russia and that the government wants to increase the country's nuclear security and the reliability of its nuclear shield."¹⁷² A number of Russian officials have reiterated Putin's call to press forward on arms control.

According to Poytr Romashkin, Assistant to the Deputy Chair of the State Duma Defense Committee, there were four main reasons why the START II ratification was moved up from its original June 2000 legislative calendar date. First, in light of the world opinion concerning how Russia handled western criticism during the most recent Chechnya crisis, the new Russian President wants "to show the world public opinion that Russia is able to carry on further negotiations with the West."¹⁷³ Second, Romashkin believes that the treaty's ratification is being used as an attempt to prevent the United States from abrogating the ABM Treaty and moving forward with its proposed limited NMD. Russia's ratification of START II would "make the United States responsible for violation of strategic stability in the eyes of the world community," and in essence allow Russia to take the strategic moral high ground if a larger dispute over U.S. NMD manifests itself later.¹⁷⁴ In the eyes of the world community, Russia will no longer be

viewed as the party that disrupted strategic stability, even though it took seven years to ratify the treaty. Third, with START II ratified, Russia will be able to better influence the United States at the NMD/ABM Treaty negotiating table. The Putin administration believes that when trying to link future START negotiations to basic provisions of the ABM Treaty or when trying to negotiate the deployment of MIRVed land based ICBM's, the United States would be more receptive to Russian requests if START II was ratified.¹⁷⁵ Finally, Romashkin believes that Putin and his supporters pushed START II to the forefront because they want to support U.S. President Bill Clinton's endorsement of Vice President Al Gore in the upcoming U.S. elections. It is believed that if Clinton is seen an international peacekeeper, "who promotes strategic stability," that image will be inherited by Gore and help him win in the November election.

By ratifying the START II Treaty, Russia has placed itself in an interesting position by prohibiting the Americans from using START II as a bargaining tool for concessions on NMD/ABM Treaty issues. As mentioned by the Romashkin article, if the United States decides not to negotiate START III, abrogates the ABM Treaty, or does not ratify the 1997 Demarcation agreements, the Russians would appear to have the high ground when appealing to international public opinion. The Russians have not hidden their distaste for the START II numbers, nor their desire to move immediately into START III negotiations. President Putin's move to advance START II on the Duma legislative calendar and the strong effort made by many Russian officials to get the ratification legislation passed, despite healthy opposition, only gives the Russian leader a stronger leg to stand on when negotiating START III and resisting ABM Treaty modifications.

Had the Russian State Duma continued to stall START II ratification, the U.S. NMD/ABM Treaty modification issue would have a great effect on its ratification chances. Now that the treaty has been ratified, the effects that the U.S. NMD debate will have on the treaty, from a Russian standpoint, have been significantly reduced. There is still a chance that if the United States abrogates the ABM Treaty and moves ahead with its limited NMD, against the wishes of Russia; the START process could be in jeopardy. But with the treaty already being ratified, in essence the Russians have left the future of the START and strategic arms control up to the Americans. The Americans would have been better served in their NMD/ABM Treaty hopes if the Russians would not have ratified START II, thus giving the Americans more leverage when using future START agreements as a negotiating tool in future NMD/ABM Treaty talks.

C. FUTURE START AGREEMENTS

The Clinton administration's approach has been to link the ABM Treaty/NMD issue to future START negotiations. It had indicated that it would not submit the September 1997 ABM Treaty agreements to the U.S. Senate, nor would the United States begin formal START III negotiations, until the Russians had ratified START II. The Americans' hope is that the Russians will allow the United States to move forward with NMD if future nuclear force reductions are codified in START III. This would allow the Russians to slim down an already aging arsenal, while at the same time keeping parity with the United States and remaining a nuclear superpower. Currently it is not known what the exact warhead limitations would be under START III. The United States and Russia have disagreed about how deep the cuts should be. The United States has called for cutting arsenals to 2000 to 2500 warheads each, while Russian officials have said they are prepared to go to 1500 or even lower.¹⁷⁶

As displayed in the June 1999 U.S.-Russia Joint Statement and in subsequent meetings during the summer of 1999, the Russians are willing to have discussions with Americans on NMD/ABM Treaty and START issues. Currently, the two sides continue to meet at the expert or technical level in Geneva to decide on the future treaty's exact numbers. The Russians have maintained, however, that if the ABM Treaty was violated, all negotiations on strategic offensive arms would "lose any sense." According to statements made by Foreign Minister Ivanov it is from these positions that the Russian side has discussed and will discuss matters connected with a START III Treaty.

Although the START II Treaty has been ratified by both countries respective legislatures, and it appears that START III discussions will give way to formal negotiations, this might not be the end of the START debate. Republican Senator and Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Jesse Helms has vowed to block approval of any arms agreement that the Clinton administration might bring before the Senate. Senator Helms has been especially adamant on the missile defense issue and has vowed to thwart any agreement to alter the ABM Treaty. This could spell real trouble for the 1997 Demarcation Agreements that are expected to be given to the Senate now that Russia has ratified START II. In an April 26, 2000, speech, apparently intended to send a message to the President, the senator said "lets be clear to avoid any misunderstanding down the line...any modified ABM Treaty negotiated by this administration will be DOA, dead on arrival, at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee."¹⁷⁷ The Senator added that for the remainder of this year, his committee, "will not consider any new, last-minute arms control measure that this administration negotiates in its final, closing months in office."¹⁷⁸ It also was announced that the committee would not consider any

treaty that binds the new administration to the visions of the Clinton administration. According to Senator Helms, "the Russian government should not be under any illusion whatsoever that any commitments made by this lame-duck administration will be binding on the next administration."¹⁷⁹ Jon Wolfsthal, an arms control specialist with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace believes that Senator Helms comments highlight the wide disagreements that exist on the issue of NMD and arms control. Wolfsthal believes that "any deal that the Clinton administration might be able to negotiate with Russia would be unacceptable to this Senate, and any deal that the Senate would like would be rejected by the Russians."¹⁸⁰

In light of Senator Helm's comments, which represent the sentiments of many of his Senate Republican colleagues, negotiating a settlement to the NMD/ABM Treaty issue and START III is going to be very difficult. Prior to the Senate's rejection of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its hawkish attitude towards arms control, it appeared that the administration would have some leverage to use START issues as a negotiating tool in U.S.-Russian discussions concerning NMD and ABM Treaty modifications. The two sides have different expectations as to what exact limitations START III should impose on the number of allowed warheads. The United States might possibly have compromised on its requests for a limitation of 2500 to 2000 warheads and lower the number to the Russian requested 1500 to 1000 warheads, in return for Russian cooperation on NMD/ABM Treaty issues.

It is difficult to be optimistic about the chances of compromise on both U.S. NMD and START III. Russia's position, which has been thoroughly reported in both the Russian and western media, contradicts the assertion of the Clinton administration that

the NMD/ABM Treaty issue can be linked to START III. Unless one side alters its position greatly, it does not appear that there can be compromise on both issues. Perhaps if the Clinton administration were negotiating with the support of the Republican-led Senate, the chances for compromise would be greatly improved. But as long as the Russians know that any Clinton-led compromise on either issue is likely to be voted down by the Republican led Senate, there is no reason for them to change their position and compromise. In the weeks leading up to and following the START II ratification, the comments of Russian officials were very clear. With START II ratified, the responsibility of continuing the trend of bilateral cooperation on arms control has been shifted to the United States. According to many Russian officials, if the United States insists on pushing its limited NMD and calls for ABM treaty modification, it will be to blame for the collapse of the START process. Such a possibility makes those advocating for a delay in the U.S. NMD deployment decision appear more rational if both NMD and continued bilateral arms control with the Russians are a national priority.

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VI. CONCLUSION

It does not seem likely that the United States and Russia will be able to compromise on limited national missile defense. The Clinton administration's attempt to link the two issues of U.S. NMD and future arms control agreements has not yielded the results for which they had hoped. The Russians do not appear willing to agree to ABM Treaty modifications that would allow the United States to move ahead with its defensive system in return for more favorable START III terms. They also have stated that if the United States abrogates the treaty, the foundation for all current and future arms control agreements will be lost. Russian political and military leaders have threatened to answer the U.S. system with countermeasures and increased military capability. Even though, based on Russia's current economic crisis, significant military buildup is unlikely, its threat has captured the attention of U.S. policy makers and made the fate of current and future arms control agreements part of the domestic NMD debate. Under current conditions, the advancement of U.S. NMD and a future arms control agreement are not compatible.

The United States must clarify its priorities. The United States must choose what it values more, protection against rogue state ballistic missile threats provided by a limited national missile defense, or the added security that bilateral arms control agreements provide against worldwide nuclear war. It is certainly understandable why both American and Russian policy makers would be reluctant to cast aside the many years of progress and compromise arms control embodies. The question that one must ask is this: "Is the added security provided by a limited national missile defense worth possibly jeopardizing the security that current and future arms control treaties provide?"

If the Cold War really is over, why is Cold War thinking on arms control and bilateral relationships still the driving factor behind this debate? According to the same policy makers who argue that the cornerstone of strategic stability, the 1972 ABM Treaty, must not be changed at the risk of the collapse of the arms control regime, the United States and Russia are no longer adversaries. The reality of the matter is that the Soviet Union collapsed and Russia has struggled to pick up the pieces of the Soviet Empire, and, aside from nuclear weapons, is no longer able to compete with the United States. This fact, along with the belief that the two sides are no longer mortal enemies struggling to eradicate the other's ideology from the face of the earth, begs the question, "Why do they need to maintain the status quo arm control regime?" Typically, allies or "non-enemies," depending on your point of view concerning post-Cold War U.S.-Russian relations, don't need bilateral agreements that limit or reduce their weaponry to prevent them from going to nuclear war.

Because of the economic problems that Russia has faced since the collapse of the Soviet Union, their main deterrent against outside incursion is their nuclear arsenal. Because of the current condition of the Russian nuclear force and the economic commitment it will require to modernize and maintain, it makes great sense for the Russians to want both sides to reduce their authorized numbers through another START agreement. For many of the same reasons, it also makes sense for the United States to go along with Russian requests and reduce its nuclear forces. What does not make sense is that the new number of allowed warheads under a future START III agreement, which has been speculated and even leaked to the American press, is based more on Russian capabilities than American.

Such a plan has become possible because of the Clinton administration's desire to link START III negotiations to the NMD/ABM Treaty debate. Many supporters of NMD, but critics of the Clinton administration's policy, have argued that under such a linkage the United States would be leaving its fate against rogue state missiles up to the Russians. The administration's argument that arms control is too important to throw away does indeed have validity, but any new arms control agreement should represent the post-Cold War global security reality. If the intent of the administration and the arms control community is to maintain a bilateral treaty relationship with the Russians to prevent a new arms race, its should not be done at the expense of national security. Any new arms control agreement should take into account that the Russians don't have the economic capability to engage in an arms race and should be based on the premise that U.S. strategic weapons, or defenses for that matter, would not be focused on the Russian Federation.

New agreements should focus their efforts on better inspection and confidence building programs that are designed to demonstrate each side's capabilities to ease tensions and fears, rather than on past ideological assumptions. Both sides should work to modernize older command and control systems and prevent the spread of nuclear and delivery system technology from hitting the open market and falling into the hands of rogue states. Well-developed and explicitly defined verification processes that cover offensive and defensive systems should be a major part of any new agreement. This new type of agreement would allow both sides the needed flexibility to carryout a national defense policy free of outdated bilateral restraints, while at the same time providing a better regime to monitor each others offensive and defensive nuclear systems. A regime

based on verification and confidence building, rather than warhead counting and limitation of technological growth, will better allow for technology and capability to keep pace with future threats.

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